

RITUAL

B. P. O. ELKS

B. W. Denio

RITUAL

of the

SUBORDINATE LODGES

Under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge

of the

BENEVOLENT AND PROTECTIVE

ORDER OF ELKS

Of the United States of America

Property of the

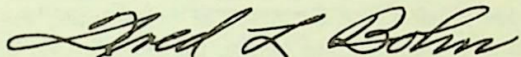
GRAND LODGE

NINETEEN HUNDRED FIFTY-SIX

CERTIFICATION

THIS RITUAL, adopted in substantial part by the Grand Lodge of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the United States of America at the Grand Lodge Session in 1930, and subsequently amended in part by the Grand Lodge Sessions in 1946, 1952, and 1956, is in effect in present form as of October, 1956.

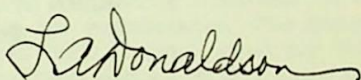
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have hereunto set our hands and caused the seal of the Grand Lodge to be affixed October, 1956.



Grand Exalted Ruler



Attest:



Grand Secretary

NOTE

Extract from the Constitution, Article 1, Section 1:

"This Constitution, the statutes enacted by the Grand Lodge not in conflict therewith, and the RITUAL, WITH THE INSTRUCTIONS THEREIN CONTAINED, SHALL BE THE SUPREME LAW OF THE ORDER."

October, 1956

These Rituals adopted by the Grand Lodge supersede previous Rituals for opening and closing a Subordinate Lodge session, the initiation of candidates, the institution of a Subordinate Lodge, the installation of officers of a Subordinate Lodge, and the announcement of the death of a brother.

JOHN F. MALLEY, *Chairman*
Special Ritual Committee

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

RITUALS AND REGALIA

All District Deputies and Exalted Rulers shall enforce a strict adherence to the Ritual, and shall be held responsible for any irregularities which may occur in their respective jurisdictions. They shall not permit the use of any charge, lecture, form, ceremony, form of initiation or regalia other than those prescribed in the Ritual.

The complete Rituals are the property of the Grand Lodge and must be properly cared for and preserved by the subordinate lodges. The Secretary of each subordinate lodge shall be the custodian of all Rituals issued to his lodge.

Such jewels for officers as are specified by the Grand Lodge shall be worn by them during lodge sessions.

QUESTION BOOK

Each lodge may purchase from the Grand Lodge an official question book containing questions to be answered by candidates for membership. The Secretary, when the question book is used, must see that each candidate answers the questions in this book and signs his name thereto as a part of his qualification for initiation. However, the question book may be dispensed with provided the candidate's application which contains the same questions and answers is kept as a permanent record in the archives of the subordinate lodge.

ESQUIRE

It shall be the duty of the Esquire prior to the opening of the Lodge, to see that the altar cover is placed on the altar, and also, when necessary, a suitable base to receive the Emblem, that the officers' jewels are placed at their respective stations, that a gavel is at the station of the Exalted Ruler and of the Esteemed Leading Knight, that the Flag (on a staff in a standard) is placed at the station of the Esteemed Leading Knight on his right; the Bible at the station of the Esteemed Loyal Knight;

the Emblem at the station of the Esteemed Lecturing Knight, the star in position over the altar, the ode cards distributed about the room, and the Flag stand in position at the right of the altar towards the station of the Esteemed Loyal Knight.

The Esquire must examine the cards of all visiting brothers present prior to the opening of the lodge and fully satisfy himself that they are entitled to admission, so as to be in position to introduce them to the lodge at the proper time.

After the lodge has been opened, when a visiting brother is announced, it shall be the duty of the Esquire, under direction of the Exalted Ruler, to secure from the Inner Guard the card of the brother. He shall then retire to the anteroom and examine the visiting brother. "Such further examination as may be required, etc," as used in the Ritual, means that the Esquire may, if in doubt, interrogate the visiting brother in a general way, as, for example: "What, if anything, was presented to you at the station of the Exalted Ruler?"

The Esquire, after the lodge has been opened, shall, under direction of the Exalted Ruler, present all visiting brothers before the altar, and about two paces distant therefrom. He shall introduce them by name and lodge. On being introduced each visiting brother shall take one step forward and give the hailing sign. On being recognized by the Exalted Ruler, he shall resume his former position.

The Esquire shall at all times while on duty in the lodge room carry the baton in the hollow of his left arm, except when it may be impracticable so to do, in which event he should place the baton on or near the altar, where it can be picked up conveniently as his duty permits or requires.

He shall answer the roll call of officers, assist the four principal officers in conducting the business of the lodge in such manner that said officers need not leave their stations, attend to the preparation and

introduction of candidates, have charge of all floor work of the lodge, and on public occasions shall act as Marshal.

When directed by the Exalted Ruler to organize the lodge, it shall be the duty of the Esquire to see that the doors are closed and that the officers are at their respective stations.

When conducting a candidate about the lodge room, the Esquire and his assistants shall walk to the left of the candidate.

After the lodge has been closed the Esquire shall collect the officers' jewels and the ode cards and deliver them, together with the Bible, the emblem, the altar cover and the Flag, into the custody of the Tiler.

TILER

It shall be the duty of the Tiler to have charge of all property of the lodge placed in his care. He shall have all necessary paraphernalia in readiness for use and in proper condition, and after the lodge is closed he shall take proper care of same.

After the Inner Guard has, under the direction of the Exalted Ruler, notified all Elks who are in the anteroom to come within the lodge, the inner door must be closed. It shall be the duty of the Tiler to prevent late arrivals from approaching the inner door until he has been notified that the lodge is regularly opened; and he must observe the same rule during the reading of the minutes and balloting for a candidate, and at all times during initiation except as he may be advised by the Inner Guard. After the lodge is opened, he shall permit no brother to approach the inner door without exhibiting a membership card, showing him to be in good standing.

It shall be the duty of the Tiler to see that each visiting brother signs his name in the Visitors' Register, which book shall be in the custody of the Tiler; he shall carefully compare the signature of each visiting brother with the signature on his visiting card. If

a visiting brother presents himself while the lodge is in session the Tiler shall, after satisfying himself that the signature is genuine, pass the visiting card of the brother to the Inner Guard, who shall inform the Exalted Ruler, and deliver the visiting card to the Esquire as he approaches the door to conduct the visiting brother to the altar.

INNER GUARD

It shall be the duty of the Inner Guard to guard carefully at all times the inner door of the lodge; to permit no brother to enter until he has given the alarm correctly, except upon direction of the Exalted Ruler; to permit no brother to retire from the lodge room until he has received permission from the Exalted Ruler; to admit no brother during initiation, except when the same can be done without in any way interfering with the work, and of this the Esteemed Leading Knight shall be the judge.

ARRANGEMENT OF ALTAR

The Esquire, upon receiving the Flag upon its staff from the Esteemed Leading Knight, shall proceed directly to the altar, carrying the Flag, and shall place the Flag in the Flag stand in the position of honor to the right of the altar, as he faces the Exalted Ruler. The Bible shall be opened and placed upon the altar, and the Emblem shall be placed upon the altar in back of the Bible as viewed by the candidate as he stands before the altar; the Emblem shall face the station of the Esteemed Leading Knight (if necessary, a suitable base may be placed beneath the Emblem). The star shall be suspended over the altar at the proper height to give the best effect and so as not to interfere with the view of a brother at the altar when saluting the Exalted Ruler. About eight or nine feet above the floor will be found to give the best effect, but this must depend somewhat on the arrangement of the lodge room. The switch controlling the star should be conveniently located so that the Exalted Ruler, or some designated officer, can control it as indicated in the Ritual.

BALLOTING

The Esquire shall prepare and pass the ballot box. In doing so he shall first pass it to the Esteemed Leading Knight for inspection, then to the Exalted Ruler for further inspection and ballot. After the Exalted Ruler has balloted, the Esquire shall face the lodge and proceed to the right, presenting the ballot box to each chair officer of the lodge. He shall then place it upon a table or stand to be placed only for this purpose to the left of the altar or, when more than one is necessary, on both sides of the altar, and cast his ballot.

The brothers shall form in line and begin voting from the right of the Exalted Ruler, voting as rapidly as possible. The Esquire, during the ballot, shall take his position about six feet to the left of the altar, facing the Exalted Ruler, as shown in diagram, and the brothers in voting shall pass in front of him. When all brothers have voted, the Esquire shall report to the Exalted Ruler, who shall then say: "Brother Esquire, you will close the ballot and present it to the Esteemed Leading Knight for inspection." The Esquire shall then proceed with the ballot to the Esteemed Leading Knight, who shall examine the same, after which the Esquire shall present it to the Exalted Ruler for examination by him. The Esquire shall then place the ballot upon the table or stand. The Exalted Ruler shall ask the Esteemed Leading Knight, "What is the result of the ballot?" He shall answer, "The candidate has been elected (or rejected)." If the candidate be elected, the Exalted Ruler shall then say: "My brothers, you have elected Mr. _____ to become a member of this lodge by initiation (or upon a card of dismission)." If the candidate be rejected, the Exalted Ruler shall say: "My brothers, you have rejected the application of Mr. _____ for membership in this lodge." In either case, after the Exalted Ruler has announced the result of the ballot, he shall say: "Do any of the brothers wish to examine the ballot?" After the ballot has been examined, or if no brother desires to exam-

ine it, the Exalted Ruler shall say: "Brother Esquire, break the ballot." Thereupon the Esquire shall return the ballot box to the custody of the Tiler, and shall remove the tables or stands.

When two or more applicants are balloted upon at the same time, a separate ballot box shall be used for each applicant, which box shall be plainly labeled with the name of the applicant to be therein voted for. The boxes shall be suitably placed so that the members may pass from one ballot box to the other, in rotation, in depositing their ballots.

SPECIAL DIRECTIONS

It is the imperative duty of the Exalted Ruler to enforce the rule which prohibits smoking during initiation, and it is his duty to maintain absolute quiet and order at all times, more especially during the conferring of the obligation and the delivery of the lectures and instructions.

When the Exalted Ruler sounds the gavel, preparatory to opening the lodge, the officers shall immediately take their stations and the members their seats.

All officers and members, on entering or retiring from a lodge, must give the hailing sign before the altar, and they may retire only upon being recognized by the Exalted Ruler.

The expression "Before the altar" or "In front of the altar" means a position at the altar between it and the station of the Esteemed Leading Knight, facing the station of the Exalted Ruler. "Right of altar" means right of altar when facing the station of the Exalted Ruler.

Upon entering the lodge, brothers shall proceed to the altar in the most direct manner possible. Officers and members shall not cross the floor after the lodge has been opened, without permission of the Exalted Ruler, and in no case shall they pass between the altar and the station of the Exalted Ruler, except as Ritual requires during initiation, or when so ordered by the Exalted Ruler.

The Esteemed Loyal Knight and the Esteemed Lecturing Knight must strictly enforce the requirements of the Ritual in reference to the examination of the membership cards, and must, upon failure of a brother to exhibit his membership card showing that his dues have been paid up to date, immediately inform the Exalted Ruler.

If a brother, who is a member of the local lodge cannot exhibit his membership card as required, the Exalted Ruler shall ascertain from the Secretary if such brother has paid his dues for the current period, and if he has done so, he shall be entitled to remain. If he has not paid his dues for the current period, he shall be given an opportunity to do so, in default of which he shall immediately withdraw. A visiting brother who does not exhibit a membership card showing that his dues have been paid for the current period shall not be permitted to sit in a lodge, unless the Secretary of his lodge should be present and vouch for him that his dues have been paid for the current period.

Officers are required to memorize such portions of the Ritual as are assigned to their respective stations within thirty days after their election. Any officer failing to comply with this requirement shall thereby forfeit his office on vote of such forfeiture by the lodge.

At the close of the lodge each officer shall leave his jewel at his station.

MEMBERS RECEIVED ON DIMIT

When a member has been elected upon a card of dimission, and appears in the lodge for the first time after such election, he shall be received in the following manner:



Esquire: Exalted Ruler, I have the honor to introduce to you Brother ———, who has been duly elected to membership in this lodge on a card of dimission.

Exalted Ruler: I gladly welcome you to membership in ———— Lodge, No. ————, and assure you a cordial welcome from your fellow members. You are already fully aware of the principles underlying the work in which we are engaged, and in this affiliation I trust that your best efforts will be enlisted in support of the Order and in promoting the welfare of this lodge. You may be seated.



ELEVEN O'CLOCK TOAST

Whenever the lodge shall be in session and the hour of eleven shall arrive, all business shall forthwith be suspended and the following ceremony shall be observed:



Exalted Ruler: My brothers, the hour of eleven has arrived.



[Without further instruction, the Esquire shall cause all lights to be extinguished except the star and shall cause the gong to be sounded eleven times.]

Exalted Ruler: My brothers, you have heard the tolling of eleven strokes. This is to remind us that with Elks the hour of eleven has a tender significance. Wherever an Elk may roam, whatever his lot in life may be, when this hour falls upon the dial of night the great heart of Elkdom swells and throbs. It is the golden hour of recollection, the homecoming of those who wander, the mystic roll call of those who will come no more. Living or dead, an Elk is never forgotten, never forsaken. Morning and noon may pass him by, the light of day sink heedlessly in the West, but ere the shadows of midnight shall fall, the chimes of memory will be pealing forth the friendly message, "To our absent brothers."

Note: Instead of making the foregoing response, the Exalted Ruler may call on some brother to respond to the sentiment.

[The Esquire shall cause the lights to be again turned on, and the business of the lodge shall thereupon be resumed.]

ROLL CALL NIGHT

The last meeting night in October of each year is designated as Roll Call Night. Under the head of "Good of the Order," upon direction of the Exalted Ruler, the Secretary shall call the membership roll and note in his minutes the total number in attendance.

The Exalted Ruler, or some brother selected by him, shall make a brief address along fraternal lines, setting forth the importance of attending lodge meetings and asking the members present to appeal to the absentees to renew and increase their interest in the lodge.

In lodges where the membership is so large that the calling of the roll is impracticable, any other plan for determining the number in attendance may be adopted.

PAST EXALTED RULERS' NIGHT

The first meeting night in February of each year is designated as Past Exalted Rulers' Night. Previous to this date the Exalted Ruler shall designate certain Past Exalted Rulers to fill the chair offices and the positions of Esquire and Chaplain.

The Exalted Ruler shall call the lodge to order, announce the names of the brothers chosen to serve as officers, and then relinquish the gavel to his temporary successor who shall preside during the session. A special program in honor of the Past Exalted Rulers may be arranged, of such a dignified nature as the lodge may deem proper for the occasion.

FLAG ESCORT

In connection with the altar service the lodge may, if desired, provide an escort for the Flag while it is being placed in or removed from its position at the altar. It is suggested that the escort may consist of a

soldier or sailor in uniform, or a file of soldiers or sailors in uniform, marching beside the Esquire.

This arrangement is not designed to change the regular work of the Esquire, but to make it more impressive.

DRILL TEAM

Any subordinate lodge desiring so to do may utilize the services of a drill team in connection with the ceremony of initiation, the drill team to be composed of any of the members of the lodge or of another lodge.

The purpose is to make the ceremony more effective, and to stimulate the work of the regular officers.

FLORAL EMBLEM

The floral emblem of the Order is the forget-me-not, and the emblematic color is royal purple. The amaranth, used at funerals, is an imaginary flower which never fades, of a purplish color, such as the cornflower, or other flower of similar hue.

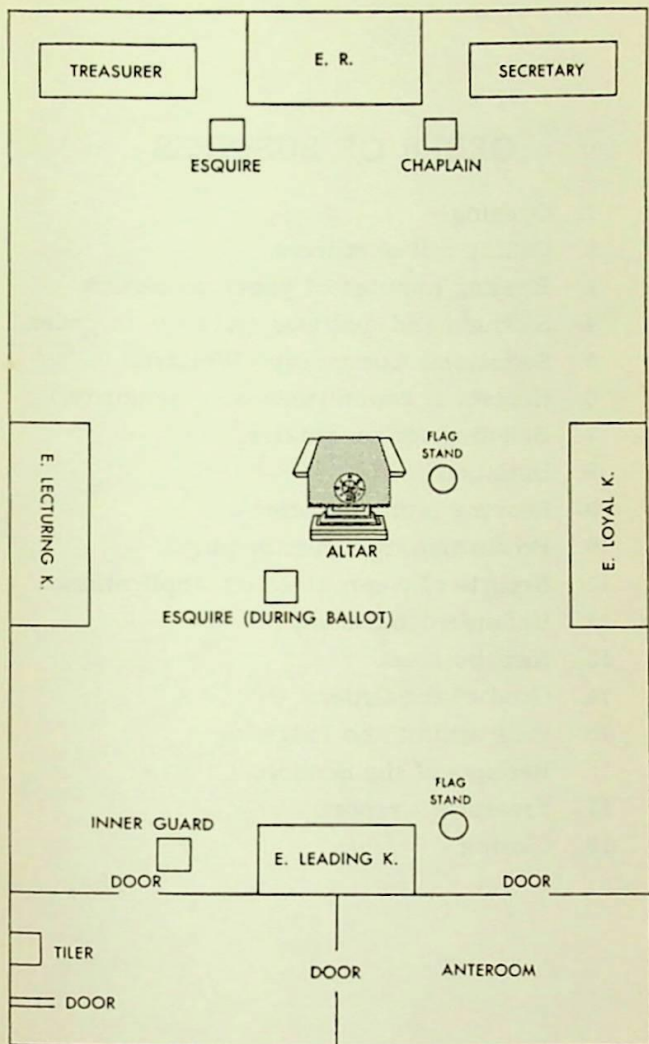
THE FLAG

The Flag presented to each candidate in the final charge of the Exalted Ruler shall be a small silk American Flag of ordinary pocket handkerchief size, and it shall become and be the personal property of the recipient.

HONORS TO GRAND LODGE OFFICERS

When a Grand Lodge officer officially visits a subordinate lodge, he shall be received in the following manner:

As the officer enters the lodge room, the Exalted Ruler shall call up the lodge, and after the proper salutation in front of the altar shall have been given by the visitor, he shall be saluted with the hailing sign given once only by all the brothers in unison, led by the Esquire.



ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Opening.
2. Calling roll of officers.
3. Reading minutes of previous session.
4. Sickness and distress. (Always in order.)
5. Social and Community Welfare.
6. Reports of committees. (By seniority.)
7. Balloting for candidates.
8. Initiation.
9. Reading communications.
10. Propositions for membership.
11. Reports of committees on applications.
12. Unfinished business.
13. New business.
14. Good of the Order.
15. Bills against the lodge.
16. Receipts of the Session.
17. Treasurer's report.
18. Closing.

OPENING

[The Exalted Ruler assumes his station and by sound of the gavel calls the lodge to order.]



Exalted Ruler: I am about to open _____
Lodge, No. _____, of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks. Brother Inner Guard, inform the Tiler, invite all Elks to come within the lodge room, and guard well the inner door.

[The Inner Guard complies with the order.]

Inner Guard: Exalted Ruler, your order has been obeyed.

Exalted Ruler: Visiting brothers who have not been examined by the Esquire will please retire to the anteroom.

[It is the duty of the Esquire to see that all visiting brothers retire, who have not been examined by him at this or at a prior meeting within the current period for the payment of dues.]

Esquire: Exalted Ruler, your request has been complied with.

Exalted Ruler: Esteemed Loyal Knight, with the assistance of the Esteemed Lecturing Knight, you will ascertain if all present are qualified to remain.

[These officers shall meet at the altar and advance from either side thereof to the station of the Exalted Ruler, to whom they shall exhibit their membership cards. Thereupon

they shall proceed to examine the brothers on their respective sides of the room, commencing at the right and left of the Exalted Ruler (omitting the visiting brothers).

[If any brother be found without a membership card showing that his dues are paid for the current period, the fact shall be reported to the Exalted Ruler. Thereupon the Exalted Ruler shall ascertain from the Secretary whether or not the brother is entitled to remain in the lodge room and shall direct the examining officer accordingly. If the brother is not entitled to remain by reason of non-payment of current dues, he shall be given an opportunity to pay the same, in default of which he shall immediately withdraw.]

[After completing their duties, the examining officers shall advance to the altar and in unison salute the Exalted Ruler with the hailing sign.]

Esteemed Loyal Knight: Exalted Ruler, all present, excepting visiting brothers, have been examined and are qualified to remain.

[The Esteemed Loyal Knight and the Esteemed Lecturing Knight shall then return to their respective stations.]

Exalted Ruler: Visiting brothers will please rise. Brother Esquire, are you satisfied that these visiting brothers are qualified to remain?

Esquire: I am, Exalted Ruler.

Exalted Ruler: Brother Esquire, you will cause the visiting brothers to approach the altar and introduce them to the lodge.

[The Esquire assembles the visiting brothers across the lodge room about six feet in front of the altar. He shall introduce each brother separately by giving his name and the name and number of his lodge. The visiting brother, when the number of his lodge is announced, shall take one step forward and give the hailing sign. On being recognized by the Exalted Ruler he shall resume his former position until all have been introduced and until the Exalted Ruler shall have directed that the visiting brothers be seated.]

Exalted Ruler: In the name of the Order, and on behalf of this lodge, I greet you as brothers. You may be seated.

Exalted Ruler: Brother Esquire, have you performed your duties?

Esquire: I have, Exalted Ruler; a quorum is present, the officers are at their stations in proper regalia, and the altar emblems await your command.



Exalted Ruler: Brother Inner Guard, ascertain if this lodge is properly tiled.

[It is the duty of the Inner Guard to open the door and ascertain if the Tiler is at his station and in the performance of his duties.]

Inner Guard: Exalted Ruler, the lodge is properly tiled.

Exalted Ruler: What is your duty?

Inner Guard: To guard well the inner door of the lodge, to permit none to enter except those duly

qualified, and none to retire without your permission.

Exalted Ruler: Brother Esquire, what is your duty?

Esquire: To receive candidates, prepare them for initiation, act as their guide through the ceremony and explain to them the procedures of the Order; to see that the signs are given correctly, examine and introduce visiting brothers, make all arrangements for ritualistic work, prepare and carefully guard the ballot, and see that the orders of the Exalted Ruler are properly executed.

Exalted Ruler: Esteemed Lecturing Knight, what is your duty?

Esteemed Lecturing Knight: To exemplify the motto of this station — Brotherly Love.

Exalted Ruler: Esteemed Loyal Knight, what is your duty?

Esteemed Loyal Knight: To see that each brother is rewarded as he shall deserve, thereby exemplifying the motto of this station — Justice.

Exalted Ruler: Esteemed Leading Knight, what is your duty?

Esteemed Leading Knight: To assist the Exalted Ruler in conducting the business of the lodge and to preside during his absence; to stand ready to hear the cry of affliction, to aid those in distress, and by precept and example inculcate the motto of this station — Charity.



Exalted Ruler: Brothers, what is the motto of the station of the Exalted Ruler?

All: Fidelity.

Exalted Ruler: Fidelity, my brothers, is of supreme importance, for only while we remain faithful to our obligation will we act toward one another with Charity, Justice and Brotherly Love. It is the duty of the Exalted Ruler to preside with impartiality, and it is the duty of the brothers, under their obligation, to assist in upholding and maintaining the honor and dignity of the Order and of this lodge. Brother Esquire, arrange the altar.

[The Esquire approaches the altar. After saluting the Exalted Ruler with the hailing sign, he proceeds to the station of the Esteemed Leading Knight.]

Esquire: (standing before the station, addressing the Esteemed Leading Knight): Esteemed Leading Knight, I come to you for the emblem of your station, the American Flag, that it may be placed in position of honor at the right of the Altar of Elkdom.

Exalted Ruler: Brothers, salute our Flag.

[The Brothers give the civilian salute]

Esteemed Leading Knight (hands Flag on staff to *Esquire*): Place this Flag lovingly beside the altar, Brother Esquire, and may its beauty increase the devotion of the members to its radiant stripes and celestial stars that insure protection of our land of liberty and testify to its glorious victories.

[The Esquire, carrying the Flag on its staff, marches directly to a position in front of the altar, facing the Exalted Ruler, and delivers this tribute]:

Esquire: This is the Flag of our country, the emblem of freedom and the symbol of unity. As Americans and patriots we place it beside our altar. And as the American Flag typifies the glory of our nation we have adopted it as emblematic of the cardinal principle of our Order — Charity.

[After delivering this tribute, the Esquire places the Flag in its stand to the right of the altar. During this Flag ceremony the Brothers should be standing at salute and the organist should be playing our National Anthem. After the Flag has been placed in its stand to the right of the altar, the lodge will be at ease and the Esquire proceeds to the station of the Esteemed Loyal Knight, from whom he receives the Bible, returns to the altar, and places it opened upon the altar. Meanwhile the organist plays softly "Nearer, My God, to Thee," beginning as the Esquire starts toward the station of the Esteemed Loyal Knight.]

Esquire: This is the Bible, the Book of Law, upon which is founded Justice.

[The brothers sing or the Organist plays "Nearer, My God, to Thee," after which the Esquire proceeds to the station of the Esteemed Lecturing Knight, from whom he receives the Emblem, returns to the altar and places it upon the altar in back of the Bible as viewed by the candidate as he stands before the altar; the Emblem shall face the station of the Esteemed Leading Knight. Meanwhile the Organist plays softly "Auld Lang Syne," beginning as the

Esquire starts toward the station of the Esteemed Lecturing Knight.]

Esquire: These are the antlers, the emblem of our Order, significant of the protection afforded through Brotherly Love.

[The brothers sing or the Organist plays "Auld Lang Syne."]

Esquire: Exalted Ruler, the altar has been arranged.

[The lights are all turned out and while the room is in total darkness the Esquire returns to his station.]

Exalted Ruler: Upon these sacred emblems will now be shed the soft and fervent glow of the fixed star, emblematic of Fidelity.

[Light is turned on the star.]

Exalted Ruler: Brothers, unite in singing the opening ode.

OPENING ODE

[Air, "Auld Lang Syne."]

Great Ruler of the universe
All-seeing and benign,
Look down upon and bless our work,
And be all glory Thine;
May Charity as taught us here
Be ever borne in mind,
The Golden Rule our motto true,
For days of Auld Lang Syne.

[During the singing of the ode the Chaplain takes his position at the altar.]

Chaplain: Let us pray: Our Father Who art in Heaven, direct us in all our deliberations with Thy most gracious favor, and further us with Thy continued help, that in all our works begun, continued and ended in Thee, we may glorify Thy holy name. Enlighten our minds more and more with the principles of our Order — Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love and Fidelity. Let the light of Thy countenance shine upon us even as the light of this star. Increase in us true benevolence, nourish us with all goodness, keep us faithful to our obligation, and lead us and all Elks beside the still waters of peace, for Thine is the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

All: Amen.

[The lights are now turned on, first giving the Chaplain sufficient time to return to his station.]

Exalted Ruler: Brothers, give the sign. I now declare _____ Lodge, No. _____, regularly opened. Brother Inner Guard, inform the Tiler.

[The Inner Guard shall open the door and inform the Tiler that the lodge is opened.]



INITIATION

[Any subordinate lodge desiring so to do may utilize the services of a drill team in connection with the ceremony of initiation, such team to be composed of members of the local lodge or of another lodge. When the ceremony is performed by the regular officers of the lodge, the Exalted Ruler shall preside. If the Exalted Ruler be absent, the Esteemed Leading Knight may preside. As an act of courtesy any one of the following officers may be invited to preside: any Past Exalted Ruler of the local lodge, the Exalted Ruler or any Past Exalted Ruler of another lodge, the District Deputy, the Grand Exalted Ruler, or any other officer of the Grand Lodge.

[Prior to the beginning of the ceremony of initiation, the Secretary shall require each candidate to sign the question book (provided the applications are not kept as a permanent record) and pay the balance of the initiation fee and dues for the current period.]

[Smoking is positively prohibited during initiation.]

Exalted Ruler: Brother Secretary, are there any candidates awaiting initiation?

Secretary (standing): Exalted Ruler, Mr.____ (and____associates) is in waiting and requests initiation into this lodge.

Exalted Ruler: Has the candidate been duly elected to membership in our Order, and has he complied with our laws?

Secretary: He has.

[The Secretary resumes his seat.]

Exalted Ruler: Brother Esquire, you will retire to the anteroom, prepare the candidate for initiation and conduct him to the door of the lodge.

[The Esquire retires. If there should be more than one candidate, the foregoing and subsequent responses must be made to conform to the plural. The Esquire shall select such assistants as may be necessary.]



Exalted Ruler: My brothers, we are about to perform the solemn ceremony of initiation; and, as the impressions produced on the mind of the candidate are likely to be lasting, I earnestly charge you to observe the utmost decorum during its progress. You will refrain from smoking, cease conversation, and so deport yourselves as not to disturb the officers in charge or distract the attention of the candidate.

With this reminder of the important work we are about to undertake, I now declare this lodge ready for initiation.

Brother Inner Guard, inform the Esquire that the lodge is prepared to receive the candidate.



[The candidate shall be conducted by the Esquire to the inner door. The Esquire shall give the rap for admission and the Inner Guard shall respond.]

Inner Guard: Who comes here?

Esquire: The Esquire, with Mr. _____
(and _____ associates), who desires to become a
member of the Benevolent and Protective Order
of Elks.

Inner Guard: Is he properly prepared and
vouched for?

Esquire: He is properly prepared and I, as an
Elk, vouch for his identity.

Inner Guard: Exalted Ruler, the Esquire seeks
admission with Mr. _____ (and _____ associ-
ates), who requests initiation into our Order.

Exalted Ruler: If he is properly prepared and
vouched for, admit him.



[Music.—The Inner Guard opens the door.
Lights should be dimmed.]

Inner Guard: The Exalted Ruler bids you enter.

[The Esquire conducts the candidate to the
right and walks with him once around the
lodge room. As he passes the stations of the
several chair officers they will deliver the fol-
lowing.]

Esteemed Loyal Knight: Be just to your fellow-
man.

Esteemed Lecturing Knight: Ever practice
brotherly love.

Esteemed Leading Knight: Be charitable to all mankind.

[The Esquire brings the candidate before the altar.]

Esquire: Exalted Ruler, I present the candidate.

Exalted Ruler: Mr. _____ (and _____ associates), you have been duly accepted by the brothers of this lodge as worthy to become united with them in the noble work to which this Order is dedicated. Before proceeding further with your initiation, it is necessary for you to take the solemn and binding oath and obligation of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks. In this, I assure you, there is nothing which will interfere with your duty to yourself or your family, or conflict with your religious or political opinions. Are you willing to assume such an obligation?

[Candidate replies.]

Exalted Ruler: Do you believe in God?

[Candidate replies.]

★ ★ ★ ★

Exalted Ruler: My Brothers, be attentive while I am administering the obligation.

[Exalted Ruler and Chaplain approach the altar—the Chaplain to the left of the Exalted Ruler, both facing the candidates and standing close to the altar.]

Chaplain: Let us pray: Our Father Who art in Heaven, we have gathered as the sons of men, and Thy children, to renew our obligation of brother-

hood. Prosper us in this labor of love. Bless this candidate, and grant that he may become a true and loyal brother among us, exemplifying the virtues of Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love and Fidelity. In all our endeavors for good, lead us and all Elks into the green pastures of knowledge, and beside the still waters of peace. Amen.

All: Amen.

Exalted Ruler: Brother Esquire, place the candidate in position to assume the obligation, standing erect, his left hand over his heart, his right hand uplifted above the altar upon which rests the Holy Bible and the antlers of protection.

[The Esquire places the candidate in position before the altar. If there is a large number of candidates they should be arranged in single, or when necessary in double or triple file about the altar, facing the station of the Exalted Ruler.]

Esquire: Exalted Ruler, the candidate is in position.

[All lights, except the star, are to be extinguished until after the Eleven O'Clock Toast. The Organist should play softly the strains of some sacred music.]

Exalted Ruler: The candidate will say, "I," pronounce his name in full, and repeat after me:

OBLIGATION

I, _____, in the presence of God and this lodge of Elks, do solemnly promise and swear that I will never reveal any of the confidential matters of this Order which have been, or may

hereafter be, committed to my charge and keeping.

I will support the Constitution, and obey the statutes, rules and regulations of the Grand Lodge of this Order, and the by-laws of _____ Lodge, No. _____, and those of any other lodge of which I may hereafter become a member.

I will uphold the Constitution and laws of the United States of America.

I will propose no one for membership in this Order whom I do not sincerely believe to be worthy thereof.

I will ballot for a worthy candidate and against an unworthy candidate when proposed by another.

I will not permit any political, sectarian or personal prejudice to influence me in the slightest degree in the exercise of my right of franchise in the Order.

I will obey any lawful summons sent me by any competent authority of the Order.

I will never apply to the courts for redress in any matter concerning the Order, without first appealing to the councils of the Order.

I will never reveal to anyone, not an Elk, the name of a brother asking or receiving aid or relief from the Order.

I will not, directly or indirectly, use my membership in this Order, nor any emblem, insignia or sign thereof, for business or commercial purposes.

I will never introduce into the Order anything of a political or sectarian character, nor in any way by my conduct bring reproach upon it.

I will always protect a brother, his good name and his family; and I will always respect and defend the purity and sanctity of his home and fireside.

If I break this oath, may I wander through the world forsaken; may I be pointed out as a being bereft of decency and manhood, unfit to hold communion with true and upright men. And may God help me, and keep me steadfast in this my solemn and binding obligation in the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the United States of America. Amen.

All: Amen.

Exalted Ruler: At ease.

[The Esquire withdraws the initiate a step from the altar. The members sing "Nearer, My God, to Thee."]

Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee;
E'en though it be a cross
That raiseth me;
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee.

[The Esquire shall cause the gong to strike eleven slowly. At the eleventh stroke the Esquire shall say solemnly: "It is the Mystic Hour."]

Exalted Ruler: My brother, you have heard the tolling of eleven strokes. This is to impress upon you that with us the hour of eleven has a tender

significance. Wherever an Elk may roam, whatever his lot in life may be, when this hour falls upon the dial of night, the great heart of Elkdom swells and throbs. It is the golden hour of recollection, the homecoming of those who wander, the mystic roll call of those who will come no more. Living or dead, an Elk is never forgotten, never forsaken. Morning and noon may pass him by, the light of day sink heedlessly in the West, but ere the shadows of midnight shall fall, the chimes of memory will be pealing forth the friendly message, "To our absent brothers."

[Lights turned on.]

Brothers, for the instruction of this newly-made brother, extend the right hand in token of the renewal of your obligation.

[Each brother stretches forth his right hand.]

This, my brother, is to teach you that while you remain faithful to your obligation, these hands and the hands of every Elk on the face of the earth will be stretched forth to you in a spirit of fellowship and to relieve your distress should you be overtaken by adversity and misfortune. On the contrary, should you prove unfaithful, these same hands will be clenched (*each member clenches his right hand*) to drive you from our midst and punish you for your infidelity.

[The Exalted Ruler and Chaplain
return to their stations.]



[The presentation of *Thanatopsis* is optional, but if used shall be recited at this stage of the initiatory work by the Exalted Ruler or by some brother whom he shall designate. The candidate should be seated. Each lodge may work out its own plan of presentation, so long as it is in keeping with the solemnity of the poem and the dignity and impressiveness of the initiatory work.]

THANATOPSIS

To him who in the love of Nature holds
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks
A various language; for his gayer hours
She has a voice of gladness, and a smile
And eloquence of beauty, and she glides
Into his darker musings, with a mild
And healing sympathy, that steals away
Their sharpness, ere he is aware. When thoughts
Of the last bitter hour come like a blight
Over thy spirit, and sad images
Of the stern agony, and shroud, and pall,
And breathless darkness, and the narrow house
Make thee to shudder, and grow sick at heart—
Go forth, under the open sky, and list
To Nature's teachings, while from all around—
Earth and her waters, and the depths of air,—
Comes a still voice — Yet a few days, and thee
The all-beholding sun shall see no more
In all his course; nor yet in the cold ground,
Where thy pale form was laid, with many tears,
Nor in the embrace of ocean, shall exist

Thy image. Earth, that nourished thee, shall claim
Thy growth, to be resolved to earth again,
And, lost each human trace, surrendering up
Thine individual being, shalt thou go
To mix forever with the elements,
To be a brother to the insensible rock
And to the sluggish clod, which the rude swain
Turns with his share, and treads upon. The oak
Shall send his roots abroad, and pierce thy mould.
Yet not to thine eternal resting-place
Shalt thou retire alone, nor couldst thou wish
Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie down
With patriarchs of the infant world — with kings,
The powerful of the earth — the wise, the good,
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulchre. The hills,
Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun,—the vales
Stretching in pensive quietness between;
The venerable woods—rivers that move
In majesty and the complaining brooks
That make the meadows green; and, poured
 round all,
Old ocean's gray and melancholy waste,—
Are but the solemn decorations all
Of the great tomb of man. The golden sun,
The planets, all the infinite host of heaven,
Are shining on the sad abodes of death,
Through the still lapse of ages. All that tread
The globe are but a handful to the tribes
That slumber in its bosom. Take the wings
Of morning, pierce the Barcan wilderness,
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods

Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound,
Save his own dashings—yet—the dead are there;
And millions in those solitudes, since first
The flight of years began, have laid them down
In their last sleep—the dead reign there alone.
So shalt thou rest, and what if thou withdraw
In silence from the living, and no friend
Take note of thy departure? All that breathe
Will share thy destiny. The gay will laugh
When thou art gone, the solemn brood of care
Plod on, and each one as before will chase
His favorite phantom; yet all these shall leave
Their mirth and their employments, and shall
come

And make their bed with thee. As the long train
Of ages glides away, the sons of men,
The youth in life's green spring, and he who goes
In the full strength of years, matron and maid,
The speechless babe, and the gray-headed man,—
Shall one by one be gathered to thy side,
By those, who in their turn shall follow them.
So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan which moves
To that mysterious realm, where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon, but sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

Exalted Ruler: Brother Esquire, you will now conduct the brother to the station of the Esteemed Lecturing Knight for further instruction.

[Vocal or instrumental music, during which the Esquire conducts the candidate to the station of the Esteemed Lecturing Knight, and in so doing passes in order the stations of the Esteemed Loyal Knight and of the Exalted Ruler, placing the candidate in position facing the Esteemed Lecturing Knight and immediately in front of his station.]

Esquire: Esteemed Lecturing Knight, by direction of the Exalted Ruler, I present this brother for further instruction.

Esteemed Lecturing Knight: My brother, I welcome you to this station which is dedicated to Brotherly Love. Upon our altar it is symbolized by the antlers of protection.

The animal from which our Order derives its name is noted for gentleness and timidity. It is strong of limb, fleet of foot, quick and keen of perception. So should we be, my brother, quick to hear the cry of distress, timorous of doing wrong and fleet of foot to relieve the unfortunate, thus conforming to the Golden Rule which should govern all mankind.

In this rule, which is the foundation and groundwork of our Order, Brotherly Love finds its most perfect expression; and it is best exemplified by practicing the teachings of our motto — "The faults of our brothers we write upon the sand; their virtues upon the tablets of love and memory."

It softens the stern realities of life and manifests itself in good fellowship, in sympathy, and in kindness of thought, word and deed. It has smiles and laughter for us in seasons of joy, and it sits with us in the shadow and weeps in the hour of bereavement. It teaches us to scatter flowers along life's pathway and to speak words of kindness to the living as well as to cherish the memory of the dead.

As we therefore have opportunity, let us do good unto all men, for we pass this way but once. We cannot retrace our steps nor call back the days that are gone; but the passing moment is ours long enough to grasp the hand in friendship, to lighten each other's burdens, to bring rest to the weary, and to comfort those who mourn — this is Brotherly Love.

Brother Esquire, you will now conduct the brother to the station of the Esteemed Loyal Knight for further instruction.

[Vocal or instrumental music, during which the Esquire conducts the candidate to the station of the Esteemed Loyal Knight, and in so doing passes the station of the Esteemed Leading Knight, placing the candidate in position facing the Esteemed Loyal Knight and immediately in front of his station.]

Esquire: Esteemed Loyal Knight, by direction of the Esteemed Lecturing Knight, I present this brother for further instruction.

Esteemed Loyal Knight: My brother, upon the altar before which you have just assumed the

solemn obligation of our Order, there lies the open Bible. It is the emblem of this station, whose motto is Justice.

You have sworn to support the Constitution and comply with the laws of this Order and the by-laws of this lodge. Justice requires that your observance of that oath should be full and complete, for the first lesson it teaches is that of duty and obedience to constituted authority.

When you have signed our roster and received your membership card the Secretary will present you with a copy of the Constitution and Statutes of the Grand Lodge and the by-laws of this lodge.

I charge you to familiarize yourself with their every provision; for, while Justice is not vindictive, it is exacting; and no violation of your obligation, no failure to perform your fraternal duty, can be permitted to pass this station unnoticed.

But the Order of Elks not only exacts from you the strict performance of the duties of membership; it likewise bestows upon you cherished rights and privileges which its whole power and authority will insure and protect. Should you feel at any time that these rights have been invaded, the courts of the Order are open to you. The decision of its highest tribunal should be accepted as final.

Brother Esquire, you will now conduct the brother to the station of the Esteemed Leading Knight for further instruction.

[Vocal or instrumental music during which the Esquire conducts the candidate to the station of the Esteemed Leading Knight, and in so

doing passes in order the stations of the Exalted Ruler and of the Esteemed Lecturing Knight, placing the candidate in position facing the Esteemed Leading Knight and immediately in front of his station.]

Esquire: Esteemed Leading Knight, by direction of the Esteemed Loyal Knight, I present this brother for further instruction.

Esteemed Leading Knight: My brother, the emblem of this station is the Flag of our Country; and its motto is Charity, the cornerstone of every Elk structure, the highest virtue of every Elk creed.

The daily gifts we bestow increase our own riches. The help we extend to those in need is added to our own strength. The witchery of wealth is not in having, but in sharing. The real benefactor of mankind counts his store in what is given, not in what is saved.

But, as Elks, we teach not alone the charity of alms, but the higher and nobler charity of thought, word and deed. Our whole influence in life is determined by the good deeds we do rather than by the emotions we feel. The kindest feeling may vanish, the best resolve may be forgotten; but the influence of a good deed, honestly and promptly performed, will continue forever.

There's a legend that in olden times a feast was laid on high Olympus for all the gods, and thither each did bear the goddess of his highest choice, until the throng had filled the mountain top.

Wealth and Riches came resplendent in their robes of gold, and Greed and Avarice their companions were. Peace came, and all did wonder that she leant upon the arm of War. Justice and Mercy entered, and between them proudly walked the god of Right. Faith came with Doubt, and Hope entered by the side of Fear.

Thus, each in turn, until at last, uninvited and unattended, came sweet Charity, in flowing robes of purest white, and in her arms she bore a wilderness of flowers, dear tokens of remembrance for them all.

Then Wealth and Riches drew their gorgeous robes aside, while Greed and Avarice protested loud that one so poorly dressed should royal feast attend.

Charity gave them answer soft and mild: "Have I in truth no welcome here, and is there none in all this company who will my companion be? Behold, I bring you sweetest flowers in offering and beg that you accept them from my hand. Royal robes would not befit me well, for what grace I have is not in figure nor in form. True, I come in simple raiment, unannounced, yet Misery and Want await me at the door. I speak to you of their distress, and argue for their cause."

Whereupon the gods with one acclaim did vote her purest, truest, noblest of all the Graces, ladened her with royal gifts, proffered her a crown and begged that she would sit upon the throne.

But she made them answer, that she sought her throne not among the gods, but in the hearts of

men; and, commending kindly deeds unto them all, went again upon her way.

This legend teaches us, my brother, that Charity is the greatest of all the virtues; and that it should ever rule us in our hearts and in our lives, leading us to speak no unkind word, to harbor no evil thought, to bear no malice, to support no wrong; but to nurture, love and protect; to condone, forgive and forget.

Esteemed Leading Knight: Brother Esquire, you will now conduct the brother to the station of the Exalted Ruler for final instruction.

[Vocal or instrumental music, during which the Esquire conducts the candidate to the station of the Exalted Ruler, and in so doing passes the station of the Esteemed Loyal Knight, placing the candidate in position facing the Exalted Ruler and immediately in front of his station.]

Esquire: Exalted Ruler, by direction of the Esteemed Leading Knight, I present this brother for final instruction.

[The Esteemed Leading Knight gives four raps of the gavel (* * * *), the members rise and sing "America," upon the conclusion of which the Esteemed Leading Knight gives one rap of the gavel (*) and seats the members.]

Exalted Ruler: My brother, I welcome you to this station for final instruction. You may well be proud that the members of this lodge have deemed you worthy of their confidence. I trust that you

may continue to merit their approval, and become a true and faithful brother among us. To accomplish this, you must at all times have in mind the solemn and binding obligation which you have so recently assumed, and I charge you that your highest duty as an Elk is to keep it inviolate. Conscience will not permit you to expunge a paragraph, eliminate a sentence, or evade a responsibility; nor can you lay it aside when you leave the lodge room, for it must henceforth be your constant guide and faithful monitor.

The cardinal principles of our Order are Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love and Fidelity. Each has been adopted as the motto of a station in the lodge, Fidelity being the motto of this, the principal station. It is symbolized by the star which shines above our altar.

Fidelity implies strict adherence to our obligation and faithfulness in the discharge of our duty as members of society.

As time runs on, in sun and shade, may you bear with you ever in life's changing course the sense of obligation and of wrong, and in your heart the rapture of a high resolve.

Life's story has been often told, yet each must solve anew its problems for himself.

Our time upon the stage of action is but brief, yet in the drama each must play a part. The character is left for each to choose; a villain if we will, or man of honor, holding high above all things—high as Hope's great throbbing star above the

darkness of the dead — respect for virtue, and love of wife and home and friend.

'Mid swiftly changing scenes that mark the action of the play, we by each other oft may be aided in our part, or from each other catch inspiration for a high resolve; and to this end exists the brotherhood of Elks.

The Order of Elks is distinctively American. Linking the destiny of our Order with the destiny of our country we have made its Flag the symbol of the crowning virtue.

[The Esteemed Leading Knight gives four raps. The lodge rises and remains standing at Flag salute during the delivery of the tribute to the Flag.]



[The Exalted Ruler produces the Flag, holding it in his hands. The Organist plays softly "The Star Spangled Banner".]

As this emblem is first in our hearts as loyal Americans, so is it close to our altar as loyal Elks. The gentle breezes with lingering caress kiss the folds of no flag which can compare with it in beauty. There is no such red in budding rose, in falling leaf or sparkling wine; no such white in April blossom, in crescent moon or mountain snow; no such blue in woman's eye, in ocean's depth or heaven's dome; and no such pageantry of clustering stars and streaming light in all the spectrum of the sea and sky.

In the name of this great brotherhood, and on behalf of this lodge, I present you with this, our Flag.

[The Organist plays loudly the concluding chords of "The Star Spangled Banner." The Exalted Ruler presents the Flag to the candidate. If there are a number of candidates the Exalted Ruler may deliver the Flags to the Esquire to hand to them.]

Preserve it as a memento of this occasion, and may it ever stimulate you to the performance of your full duty in the preservation and defense of all it represents.

[Brief pause. Lodge at ease.]

Finally, my brother, strive diligently that the name of Elk as borne by you may be worthy of its true synonym — one who loves his fellow man.

[The Esteemed Leading Knight gives one rap, seating the lodge.]

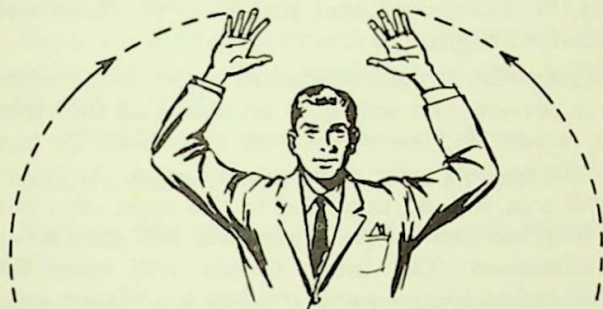


Brother Esquire, you will now conduct our brother before the altar and instruct him in the procedures of the Order.

[The Esquire conducts the candidate before the altar and takes position to the left of the altar facing the candidate. The rap for admission shall be illustrated by the Inner Guard, and the raps of the gavel by the Exalted Ruler at the precise time of reference to them by the Esquire during his instructions.]

Esquire: My brother, the membership card, which will be presented to you by the Secretary, is a means of identification. It shows that you are a

member in good standing in this lodge. You should carry it with you at all times. You are required to present it in order to gain admission to this lodge, and without it you cannot gain admission to another lodge.



The hailing sign is made by bringing the hands in one circular movement to a position over the head, palms to the front. It denotes the branching antlers of an elk. It should be given only in front of the altar in the lodge room, while the lodge is in session or when ordered by the Exalted Ruler.

[See illustration above. In explanation, suit the action to the words.]

The civilian salute to the Flag is made standing erect with the right hand over the heart.

The voting sign is made by uplifting the right hand, palm to the front.

[In explanation, suit the action to the words.]

The gavel in the hand of the Exalted Ruler is the emblem of authority. One rap (★) calls the

lodge to order, or seats it when standing; two raps (★ ★) calls up the officers; four raps (★ ★ ★ ★) calls up the entire lodge.

At the opening of the lodge, when called upon so to do, you will exhibit your membership card to either the Esteemed Loyal Knight or the Esteemed Lecturing Knight.

If you wish to gain admission to this lodge when it is in session, you will give an alarm at the outer door, which will be opened by the Tiler. To him you will exhibit your membership card. If found correct you will be admitted to the anteroom, and will then advance to the inner door and give a rap for admission. The Inner Guard will open the wicket and to him you will give, in a whisper, your name and the name and number of your lodge. The Inner Guard will report to the Exalted Ruler, at whose direction you will be admitted. You will then advance before the altar, face the Exalted Ruler and salute him with the hailing sign. It will be answered by the Exalted Ruler by a wave of the hand. You will then be seated.

You shall not cross the floor after the lodge has been opened without permission of the Exalted Ruler, and in no case shall you pass between the altar and the station of the Exalted Ruler except as Ritual requires during the initiation, or when so ordered by the Exalted Ruler.

Should you wish to retire while the lodge is in session, you will advance before the altar and salute the Exalted Ruler with the hailing sign.

When answered by him you will be at liberty to retire.

In visiting another lodge, in addition to exhibiting your membership card, it will be necessary for you to undergo such examination as may be required by the Esquire.

For your further instruction you will pay strict attention to the dialogue between the Exalted Ruler and myself.

[The Esquire faces the Exalted Ruler.]

Exalted Ruler: What made you an Elk?

Esquire: My solemn and binding oath and obligation.

Exalted Ruler: How can you prove yourself an Elk?

Esquire: By exhibiting my membership card.

Exalted Ruler: What is an Elk?

Esquire: An American citizen who guides his course in life by the cardinal principles of our Order: Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love and Fidelity.

Exalted Ruler: Give the hailing sign.

[The Esquire gives the hailing sign.]

Exalted Ruler: What does this sign denote?

Esquire: The spreading antlers of protection.

Exalted Ruler: Why were you asked if you believed in God?

Esquire: Because had I not so believed I would not have been permitted to take the obligation.

Exalted Ruler: What is the motto of our Order?

Esquire: The faults of our brothers we write upon the sand, their virtues upon the tablets of love and memory.

Exalted Ruler: What is the foundation and groundwork of our Order?

Esquire: To do unto others as we would they should do unto us.

★ ★ ★ ★

Exalted Ruler: My brothers, how do Elks receive their brothers?

[All give the hailing sign.]

All: Under the spreading antlers of protection.

Exalted Ruler: My brother, by virtue of the authority in me vested, I now declare you to be a member of _____ Lodge, No. _____, of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the United States of America, and, after signing the Constitution and By-Laws, entitled to all its rights and privileges. You may be seated.

★

[It is the duty of the Secretary to see that each candidate signs the Constitution and By-Laws after initiation and within the lodge room, during which vocal or instrumental music may be rendered.]

CLOSING

[When all the business of the session is ended the Exalted Ruler shall sound the gavel and say:]



Exalted Ruler: Brothers, having passed through our regular order of business, and complied with our laws, I shall now proceed to close the lodge. Brother Inner Guard, inform the Tiler.

[The Inner Guard opens the door and informs the Tiler and, returning, reports.]

Inner Guard: Exalted Ruler, your order has been obeyed.



Exalted Ruler: My brothers, in closing this lodge let me admonish you, under the penalty of your obligation, against revealing to any one, not an Elk in good standing, anything of a confidential nature, which has occurred at this session. May the lessons of the evening increase within each of us Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love and Fidelity.

[The Esquire takes his position before the altar, standing about six feet from it.]

Exalted Ruler: Brothers, give the sign.

[The brothers, led by the Esquire, give the hailing sign.]

Exalted Ruler: My brothers, salute the Flag and recite with me the Elks' Pledge.

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands; one Nation under God, indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all.

[During the recitation of the pledge, the Organist softly plays the National Anthem.]

[Lodge at ease.]

Exalted Ruler: Brother Esquire, attend the altar.

[The Esquire advances to the altar, removes the emblem and delivers it to the Esteemed Lecturing Knight at his station, the Organist softly playing the strains of "Auld Lang Syne."]

Esquire: Esteemed Lecturing Knight, into your charge and keeping is now committed the emblem of our Order.

[The Esteemed Lecturing Knight receives the emblem, holding it during his response.]

Esteemed Lecturing Knight: May its spreading antlers ever protect us.

[The Esquire returns to the altar, closes the Bible and delivers it to the Esteemed Loyal Knight at his station, the Organist softly playing the strains of "Nearer, My God, to Thee."]

Esquire: Esteemed Loyal Knight, to you is entrusted the Book of Law.

[The Esteemed Loyal Knight receives the Bible, holding it during his response.]

Esteemed Loyal Knight: May we ever be faithful to its precepts.

[The Esquire returns to the altar and, before taking the Flag from its stand, shall pause for a moment until the Brothers salute the Flag.]

Exalted Ruler: Brothers, salute the Flag.

[The Esquire shall then take the Flag on its staff and deliver it to the Esteemed Leading Knight at his station, the organist playing softly the strains of the National Anthem. A Flag escort may accompany the Esquire in returning the Flag. That is optional with the lodge.]

Esquire: Esteemed Leading Knight, to you is returned unsullied the Flag of our country.

[Esteemed Leading Knight receives the Flag on its staff, holding it during his response.]

Esteemed Leading Knight: May we ever love and defend it.

[Esteemed Leading Knight places Flag in stand at his right. The Lodge will then be at ease.]

[The Esquire, remaining at the station of the Esteemed Leading Knight, steps a little to his left and faces the Exalted Ruler.]

Esquire: Exalted Ruler, the emblems have been returned in accordance with your instructions.

Exalted Ruler: The star of fidelity continues ever to burn. Brother Chaplain, you will dismiss us.

Chaplain (from his station without advancing to the altar); Our Father, Who art in Heaven, we thank Thee for the fellowship and accomplishments of this hour. As we began our session in acknowledgment of Thee and Thy goodness and mercy, may we close by asking Thy benediction. May the principles of Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love and Fidelity guide us until we meet again. Amen.

Exalted Ruler: I now declare _____
Lodge, No._____, of the Benevolent and Protective
Order of Elks, closed.



INSTITUTION OF A LODGE

[The installing officer shall be addressed as "Grand Exalted Ruler." He shall select all other Grand Lodge Officers, who shall occupy their respective stations, wearing the jewels of such stations.

[The members of the lodge to be instituted shall determine upon those who are to be installed as the officers of the lodge, and file such names with the person acting as Grand Secretary prior to the institution of the lodge.]

Grand Exalted Ruler: Grand Inner Guard, request all Elks to come within this room, and guard well the inner door.

Grand Inner Guard: Grand Exalted Ruler, your order has been obeyed.

Grand Exalted Ruler: Grand Esteemed Loyal Knight and Grand Esteemed Lecturing Knight, you will ascertain if all present are qualified to remain.

[The Knights proceed to examine all present. If any one present does not have his membership card, he may be vouched for by any qualified member of the lodge who may also be present.]

Grand Esteemed Loyal Knight: Grand Exalted Ruler, all present have been found qualified to remain.

Grand Exalted Ruler: My brothers, we have assembled here to forge another link in the great

chain of brotherhood that constitutes the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks — an organization that exemplifies Charity in its sweetest form, Justice in all its majesty, and Brotherly Love with its gentleness and tenderness for all mankind.

These spiritual attributes are a precious heritage bequeathed to us by a little group of kindly, warm-hearted men, who, many years ago, were concerned about the dark days and hardships that came at times to their companions.

In their desire to be of help to each other, they heard the whisper of a divine spirit, and clasped hands with such true and deep sense of brotherhood, that they created an influence for the happiness of humanity that has increased with the advancing years.

They were inspired Master Builders. They laid the foundation of a beautiful structure that shines in eternal light. Its radiance lights posterity to ideals of thought and conduct that will never be surpassed.

Today that structure finds its replica in every city of our land, erected by thousands upon thousands of our brothers. They raised its dome still higher in the sky where it catches the last rose of sunset and the blush of dawn. These are the HOMES of our members. Their hearts respond to the magic whisper of that same divine spirit that brought about the handclasp of the Founding Fathers. That was the first link in the great chain of brotherhood that today is our Fraternity.

And we have assembled as the successors of those Master Builders, to clasp hands with still another group of kindly, warm-hearted men. Their hearts are attuned to the noble principles of our Order. They seek to add another link in that great chain of brotherhood.

That the significance of our cardinal principles may be deeply impressed upon them and remain vividly in their minds, let us erect here the altar of Elkdome. Before it they will take our obligation and voice their unfaltering belief in the existence of a divine Creator.

Grand Esquire, you will arrange the altar.



[The Grand Esquire approaches the altar. After saluting the Grand Exalted Ruler with the hailing sign, he proceeds to the station of the Grand Esteemed Leading Knight.]

Grand Esquire: Grand Esteemed Leading Knight, I come to you for the emblem of your station, the American Flag, that it may be placed in position of honor at the right of the altar of Elkdome.

Grand Exalted Ruler: Brothers, salute the Flag.

Grand Esteemed Leading Knight: (*Hands Flag, on staff, to Grand Esquire*) Place this Flag lovingly beside the altar, Grand Esquire, and may its beauty increase the devotion of the members of this new Lodge of Elks to its radiant stripes and celestial stars that ensure protection of our land of liberty, and testify to its glorious victories.

[Grand Esquire proceeds directly to the altar and places the Flag in the Flag stand in the position of honor to the right of the altar as he faces the Exalted Ruler while the Organist plays and members sing one verse of "The Star Spangled Banner".]

Grand Esquire: This is the Flag of our Country, the emblem of freedom and the symbol of unity. As Americans and patriots we place it beside our altar, and as the American Flag typifies the glory of our nation, we have adopted it as emblematic of the cardinal principle of our Order — Charity.

[Lodge at ease.]

[Grand Esquire marches to station of Grand Esteemed Loyal Knight.]

Grand Esquire: Grand Esteemed Loyal Knight, I come to you, its custodian, for the Book of Law, that it may be placed upon the altar and ever teach the members of this new lodge the lesson of Justice.

Grand Esteemed Loyal Knight: Place this Bible upon the altar, Grand Esquire, where it will ever prompt our new brothers to practice even-handed justice to all men, and teach them obedience to constituted authority.

[Grand Esquire places open Bible upon the altar while Organist plays and members sing "Nearer, My God, to Thee."]

Grand Esquire: This is the Bible, the Book of Law, upon which is founded Justice.

[Grand Esquire marches to station of Grand Esteemed Lecturing Knight.]

Grand Esquire: Grand Esteemed Lecturing Knight, from you I seek the Antlers of Protection that were borne by that proud Monarch of the Forest.

Grand Esteemed Lecturing Knight: (*Hands Antlers to Grand Esquire*) Let these Antlers be placed upon the altar to forever cast their shadow of brotherly love over our new brothers.

[Grand Esquire places Antlers upon the altar while Organist plays and members sing "Auld Lang Syne."]

Grand Esquire: These are the Antlers, the emblem of our Order, significant of the protection afforded through Brotherly Love.

Grand Exalted Ruler, the altar has been arranged.

Grand Exalted Ruler: And now let the light of the Star of Fidelity shine down upon these sacred emblems in proof of our devotion to the principles of Charity, Justice and Brotherly Love.

[Star is lighted.]

Grand Exalted Ruler: May the light of that Star never flicker or grow dim, but forever lead the members of this new lodge in the ways of Charity, that soothes, heals and blesses; of Justice, that renders to every man his due; and of Brotherly Love, that enfolds our fellow men with the arms of solicitude.

The Grand Chaplain will lead us in prayer.

Grand Chaplain: Almighty God, whose Fatherhood of man makes all men brothers, we invoke Thy presence with us at this hour, and Thy blessing upon this fraternal ceremony. Grant that this lodge, now being instituted as a unit of our Order, may prosper and grow to be a useful instrument of service to all Thy children, and be ever guided in the ways of righteousness and peace. We ask this in Thy name. Amen.

All: Amen.



Grand Exalted Ruler: Grand Esquire, you will now retire to the anteroom and conduct the candidate for initiation in this new lodge to the inner door of the lodge.

[From this point shall follow the regular ceremony of initiation, the Grand Exalted Ruler first calling up the members present and delivering the customary admonition.

[Upon conclusion of initiation the officers of the lodge shall be installed, that ceremony commencing with the query of the Secretary as to whether the officers have been duly elected. Upon conclusion of installation, the following announcement shall be made.]

Grand Exalted Ruler: Now by the authority of the Grand Lodge of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the United States of America in me vested, I do declare _____ Lodge, No._____, duly instituted and its officers regularly installed.

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

[The Exalted Ruler-elect must file with the Secretary of the lodge the names of the members he has selected for appointment as Inner Guard, Esquire, Chaplain and Organist at the opening of the meeting at which the officers of the lodge are to be installed, so that the Grand Secretary will have the complete list of names of officers to announce when requested.

[The member impersonating the Grand Exalted Ruler and those representing the other Grand Lodge Officers shall be assembled in the anteroom of the lodge and remain there from the time the lodge is opened until notified by the Inner Guard that the call has come for Installation of Officers.

[Upon being directed by the Exalted Ruler to retire to the anteroom and escort the Grand Lodge Officers within the lodge, the Esquire shall march from his station to a point near the Lecturing Knight, turn sharp left, march to the altar, face the Exalted Ruler and give the sign.

[He shall then right about face, march to the station of the Leading Knight, turn sharp (right or left), march to a point opposite the exit door and march out.

[Upon entering the lodge room with the Grand Lodge Officers, the Esquire shall lead the procession with the Grand Exalted Ruler and take a line of march that will bring him to a point near the Lecturing Knight's station, with the Grand Lodge Officers facing the

altar. This procession must not be marched around the room.

[The Installing Officers shall be addressed as Grand Lodge Officers. The member acting as Grand Exalted Ruler shall select his assisting officers and assemble them in the anteroom. During the session of the lodge, upon the announcement of "New Business—Installation of Officers" by the Exalted Ruler, the Grand Exalted Ruler shall be notified by the Inner Guard that the lodge is ready for Installation. The Grand Esquire then gives the rap for admission.]

Inner Guard: Who comes here?

[Inner Guard opens the door]

Grand Esquire: The Grand Esquire, with a special message for this lodge.

[Inner Guard closes door.]

Inner Guard: Exalted Ruler, the Grand Esquire seeks admission to deliver a special message to this lodge.

Exalted Ruler: The Esquire will retire to the anteroom and escort the Grand Esquire within the lodge.

[Music — March. Esquire retires. He shall deliver his jewel and baton to the Grand Esquire and when ready give the rap for admission.]

Inner Guard: Exalted Ruler, the Esquire with the Grand Esquire seeks admission.

Exalted Ruler: Admit them.

[Music — March.]

Esquire (at altar): Exalted Ruler, it gives me great pleasure to introduce to you and the members of this lodge, Brother_____, Grand Esquire, the bearer of a special message to this lodge.

Grand Esquire: Exalted Ruler, I desire to announce that the Grand Exalted Ruler and Grand Lodge Officers are here to install the officers-elect of this lodge.

Exalted Ruler: Grand Esquire, we shall be very happy to have you escort them within the lodge.

[Grand Esquire retires and when ready gives the rap for admission. Esquire returns to his seat.]

Inner Guard: Exalted Ruler, the Grand Esquire with the Grand Exalted Ruler and Grand Lodge Officers seek admission.

Exalted Ruler: Admit them.

[Music — March.]

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[Grand Esquire leads the procession with the Grand Exalted Ruler on his right while other officers follow. He shall take a line of march that will bring him past the altar to a point near the Lecturing Knight, so that the Grand Lodge Officers are lined up before the altar.]

Grand Esquire: Exalted Ruler, I have the honor of presenting to you our Grand Exalted Ruler and Grand Lodge Officers, who are here officially to install the officers-elect of this lodge.

[Grand Exalted Ruler and Grand Lodge Officers give the sign.]

Exalted Ruler: Grand Exalted Ruler and Grand Lodge Officers, we are greatly honored by your presence here. In deference to the high offices which you hold in the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, the officers of this lodge will most willingly surrender their stations and jewels of office to you. Brothers, greet our Grand Lodge Officers with the honors of the Order.

[All give the sign.]

Grand Esquire, you will conduct the Grand Exalted Ruler to a seat at my right.

[Grand Esquire does so and returns to the altar.]

Exalted Ruler: You will now conduct the Grand Lodge Officers to their respective stations.

[Invests Grand Exalted Ruler with jewel and hands him the gavel. Takes seat at left of Grand Exalted Ruler.]

[The Organist shall play and the members sing "America" while the Grand Esquire leads the procession of officers around the room, first passing the station of the Esteemed Leading Knight, then the Esteemed Loyal Knight, then in order the Secretary, Chaplain, Esquire, Treasurer, Trustee, Organist, Esteemed Lecturing Knight, Inner Guard and Tiler. As each station is passed, the Grand Lodge Officer assigned thereto shall drop out of the procession, be invested with the jewel of office. The Grand Esquire marches to Esquire's station. The Esquire is seated with other members.]



Grand Exalted Ruler: Grand Secretary, have the officers of _____ Lodge, No. _____, of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the United States of America been duly elected and designated for the coming year?

Grand Secretary: They have, Grand Exalted Ruler.

Grand Exalted Ruler (addressing lodge): My brothers, the duty devolves upon me to lift the burden of office from those who have borne it during the past year, and to transfer to their successors the responsibility incident to the administration of the affairs of this lodge.

The retiring officers deserve the gratitude of all the members for the successful way in which they have handled the proceedings of the lodge, and we hope they will continue to foster by word and deed, an increasing interest and activity in the great work in which our Order is engaged.

(Addressing Exalted Ruler) My brother, though you are retiring from this office, the importance of your continued interest in the affairs of your lodge cannot be too strongly emphasized. The fact that you have held the high office of Exalted Ruler marks you as one of the lodge's most valuable members, and your experience and matured knowledge should always be available.

As long as you remain a member of the Order, you are also a member of the Grand Lodge, where your participation in its sessions will be welcomed and appreciated.

May the fires of loyalty and enthusiasm, which burned in your heart while Exalted Ruler, never be extinguished.

[Exalted Ruler takes seat at left of Grand Exalted Ruler.]

Grand Exalted Ruler: Grand Secretary, you will call the names of the officers-elect and designate.

[Grand Esquire marches to a point near Lecturing Knight's station. As each name is called, the individual named takes his place before the altar in line with Grand Esquire.]

Grand Esquire: Grand Exalted Ruler, I have the honor of presenting to you for installation, Brother_____, Exalted Ruler-elect of this Lodge; also Brother_____ Esteemed Leading Knight; Brother_____ Esteemed Loyal Knight; Brother_____ Esteemed Lecturing Knight; Brother_____ Secretary; Brother_____ Treasurer; Brother_____ Trustee; and Brother_____ Tiler.

I also present to you Brothers_____, _____, _____, and _____ who have been chosen by the Exalted Ruler-elect as Inner Guard, Chaplain, Organist and Esquire, respectively, of this lodge. (*All give the sign.*)

Grand Exalted Ruler: My brothers, do you each accept the office for which you have been chosen?

All reply: I do.

Grand Exalted Ruler: My brothers, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks is dedicated to noble and exalted purposes, but as we cannot foresee the future nor envision our destiny, let us seek the blessing on this occasion of the Divine Director of all human affairs. Brother Grand Chaplain, we ask you to invoke the blessing of our Heavenly Father.



[Grand Exalted Ruler and Grand Chaplain advance to altar.

[Organist plays softly "Nearer, My God, to Thee."]

Grand Chaplain: We beseech Thee, Almighty God, to bestow Thy blessing upon this ceremony. Grant that the brothers who will at this time be entrusted with the affairs of this lodge may be guided wisely in the discharge of their duties. Impress upon them that no finer contribution can be made by them than true and inspiring service to their lodge and its members.

Bless the members of this lodge and the charitable work in which they are engaged. Protect them and their families. Bestow Thy gracious favor upon these officers to the end that all their acts may further the success and prosperity of this lodge and redound to the honor and strength of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks. Amen.

Grand Exalted Ruler: You will each place your left hand over your heart, raise your right hand, and repeat after me:

In the presence of God and of this lodge of Elks, I solemnly promise and swear to conform with and maintain the Constitution, Statutes, Rules and Regulations of the Grand Lodge of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, and the By-Laws of _____ Lodge, No. _____.

I also promise and swear to practice the virtues of Charity, Justice and Brotherly Love, and with fidelity to perform the duties of the office for which I have been chosen to the best of my ability.

May God help me and keep me steadfast as an officer of this lodge. Amen.

[Grand Exalted Ruler and Grand Chaplain return to station.]



Grand Exalted Ruler: Grand Esquire, you will now conduct the Exalted Ruler to a seat at my right.

[Music — March.]

[Grand Esquire does so and returns to the altar. Music will cease as Grand Esquire reaches altar.]

Grand Exalted Ruler: You will now conduct the Esteemed Leading Knight to his station to be invested with the jewel of his office.

[When the Grand Esquire has conducted each officer to his station, the Grand Lodge Officer occupying the station will rise, and as he places the jewel of office about the neck of the

installed officer, will deliver the following lines assigned to him and then surrender the chair to the installed officer, who takes his seat.

[The Organist will play a short march as the Grand Esquire conducts each officer to his station, and cease playing as they reach the station.]

Grand Esteemed Leading Knight: Esteemed Leading Knight, it is my privilege to invest you with this jewel of your station, dedicated to Charity — the daughter of Heaven, the mother of Humanity. May the benign influence of this virtue ever govern your activities in this lodge.

[Grand Esquire returns to the altar.]

Grand Exalted Ruler: Grand Esquire, you will now conduct the Esteemed Loyal Knight to his station, to be invested with the jewel of his office.

Grand Esteemed Loyal Knight: Esteemed Loyal Knight, the jewel of your office with which I now invest you, denotes that all your acts will be measured by even-handed justice. See to it that your conduct is always thus controlled.

[Grand Esquire returns to the altar.]

Grand Exalted Ruler: Grand Esquire, you will now conduct the Esteemed Lecturing Knight to his station, to be invested with the jewel of his office.

Grand Esteemed Lecturing Knight: Esteemed Lecturing Knight, I take pleasure in investing you with this jewel of office, emblematic of Brotherly

Love. May the gentleness and tenderness of that sentiment ever dominate your associations with your fellow men.

[Grand Esquire returns to the altar.]

Grand Exalted Ruler: Grand Esquire, you will now conduct the Secretary to his station, to be invested with the jewel of his office.

Grand Secretary: Brother Secretary, while investing you with this jewel of your office, I wish to impress upon you the great degree of care, accuracy and industry that must attend the performance of your duties. Never neglect or shirk them.

[Grand Esquire returns to the altar.]

Grand Exalted Ruler: Grand Esquire, you will now conduct the Treasurer to his station to be invested with the jewel of his office.

Grand Treasurer: Brother Treasurer, as I invest you with this jewel of your office, let me emphasize the necessity of caution and care in your handling of the funds of this lodge. Make sure that its financial structure is always intact.

[Grand Esquire returns to the altar.]

Grand Exalted Ruler: Grand Esquire, you will now conduct the Trustee to his station, to be invested with the jewel of his office.

Grand Trustee: Brother Trustee, this jewel of office is conferred upon you in expectation that you will use the utmost prudence and good judgment

in your attention to the finances and property of this lodge. Be diligent in performing this responsible trust.

[Grand Esquire returns to the altar.]

Grand Exalted Ruler: Brothers Inner Guard and Tiler, you are to hold two of the most important offices in this lodge, for only through the faithful and efficient manner in which you perform your duties will the security and sanctity of the lodge be preserved.

Brother Tiler, you are charged with the special trust of making sure that any visitor seeking admission is a qualified member in good standing in his lodge, at the same time greeting him cordially, putting him at his ease and making him feel entirely welcome.

You, Brother Inner Guard, are depended upon to make sure that none but qualified members of the Order are admitted to the lodge room, and in the performance of this duty you must be alert and vigilant.

Grand Esquire, you will now conduct the Inner Guard and Tiler to their respective stations where they will be invested with their jewels of office.

[Grand Esquire returns to the altar.]

Grand Exalted Ruler: Grand Esquire, you will now conduct the Chaplain to his station, to be invested with the jewel of his office.

Grand Chaplain: Brother Chaplain, as I invest you with this jewel of your office, I pray that the

blessing of God, when invoked by you, will be bestowed upon the members of this lodge and their charitable work.

[Grand Esquire returns to the altar.]

Grand Exalted Ruler: Grand Esquire, you will now conduct the Organist to his station, to be invested with the jewel of his office.

Grand Organist: Brother Organist, I am happy to invest you with this jewel of your office, for your music will give delight to our brothers, expel sadness, allay anger and keep our brothers in concord and unity.

[Grand Esquire returns to the altar.]

Grand Exalted Ruler: Brother Esquire, you are to hold one of the most active offices in this lodge.

You must organize each session, examine and introduce visiting brothers, supervise the ballot, explain the working details of the lodge to all candidates initiated, transmit all official messages and hold yourself in readiness to carry out the orders of the Exalted Ruler.

Be constantly on guard and vigilant in the performance of your duties.

Grand Esquire, you will now conduct the Esquire to his station, invest him with the jewel of his office and deliver to him the baton of authority.

Grand Esquire (at the station): Brother Esquire, as I deliver to you this baton of authority

and invest you with this jewel of office, I congratulate you upon the opportunity for service to your lodge that has come to you. Cherish and fulfill it.

[Grand Esquire takes seat beside Esquire.]

Grand Exalted Ruler: Exalted Ruler, (*Exalted Ruler rises*) you have been accorded the highest honor within the power of the membership of this lodge to bestow upon one of its brothers.

That is evidence of their confidence in your qualities of leadership and your faithful adherence to the four great principles of our Order. I am sure their confidence has not been misplaced.

In the year to come, all may not be plain sailing, but in guiding the affairs of this lodge you must be like the able mariner, who steers his vessel as calmly in storm as in fair weather. If you are governed by the Constitution and Statutes of the Grand Lodge, and the By-Laws of your lodge, which I now present to you, your task will be made much easier.

By one provision of the Constitution you are designated as the representative of your lodge to the ensuing session of the Grand Lodge—an honor you should regard most highly. You must attend that session, participate in its proceedings, guard the interests of your lodge and aid in promoting the affairs of the Order. This is a duty which I charge you to fulfill.

I now present to you the Charter (*or Dispensation*) granted by the Grand Lodge of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, conferring

upon _____ Lodge, No.____, all the rights and privileges, and imposing upon it the duties and obligations of a lodge of the Order. This you will consider your most sacred charge. Guard it as evidence of the trust reposed in you, and transmit it to your successor as your most precious possession.



[Lodge stands and salutes the Flag.]

And now, sir, regard that Flag that stands majestically beside the altar while the brilliant light of the Star of Fidelity shines down upon it.

The beauty of its silken folds keeps ever in mind the sublime mementos of our history.

It nourishes in the hearts of all reverence for what it represents and the memory of those who fought beneath it.

It is your solemn duty never to let our members forget their obligation of loyalty to that Flag and to those who offered their lives in its defense.

[Organist plays and members sing "The Star Spangled Banner."]



[Pause]



Grand Exalted Ruler: Officers of _____ Lodge, No.____, you have been selected by the members of your lodge to guide its affairs during the ensuing year. I hope you appreciate the importance of the trust that your brothers have confided to you. By accepting the offices with

which you have been honored, you have assumed a grave responsibility.

_____ Lodge, No.____, is one of the fraternal links in the great chain of brotherhood that constitutes the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, an organization of men noted for their patriotism and charity.

As a chain is only as strong as its weakest link, it should be your burning ambition to increase the strength and vigor of your lodge and to jealously guard its character and reputation.

You must foster at all times the spirit of utmost loyalty to our Nation's Flag, for the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks has ever been prompt and vigorous in defense of our country.

There is a time for everything, and while this is a social organization, and the sociability and friendliness of the members is to be encouraged, remember always, that the successful lodge is the one whose officers are constant exemplars of the cardinal principles of our Order — Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love and Fidelity.

If you are guided by these noble principles, your lodge will prosper and maintain its high place in the opinion of your fellow citizens. Your brothers will remember your activities with deep gratitude and you will have earned an honored place in the records of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks.



(*To Exalted Ruler*) I now, with great satisfaction, invest you with the jewel of your office (*does*

so) for I am confident that under your administration this lodge will grow and prosper, and that its reputation for works of charity and aids to humanity will be a shining light in this community.

And this is your gavel of authority. (*Holds it up.*) Use it with firmness and decision, and always with consideration of what is best for the interests of your lodge and the great Order of which this lodge is a vital part.

May you be guided by wisdom and discretion, and may the influences of Charity, Justice and Brotherly Love prompt you to rule with Fidelity.



Grand Exalted Ruler: My brothers, let us all acknowledge our allegiance to the Exalted Ruler of this lodge. (*Hands gavel to Exalted Ruler.*)

[It is discretionary with the Installing Officer whether to merely call the members to their feet and give the hailing sign, or direct the Esquire to form the members in marching order and march them past the Exalted Ruler once, saluting him with the hailing sign as they pass. The installed officers do not take part in the march.]



Grand Exalted Ruler: Now in the name and by authority of the Grand Lodge of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the United States of America, I do proclaim and declare the officers of _____ Lodge, No.____, duly installed.

[Music — "Auld Lang Syne."]

ANNOUNCING THE DEATH OF A BROTHER

[The death of a brother shall be announced at the first ensuing session of the lodge, under the order of business, "Sickness and Distress."]

Exalted Ruler: My brothers, it is my sad duty to announce the death of our brother_____ and to have official record thereof made in the proceedings of this session. The Chaplain will lead us in prayer.



[The lights are extinguished; the lodge rises, and the Chaplain advances to the altar.]

Chaplain: Almighty God, unto Thy love and mercy we commend the soul of our brother. May light perpetual shine upon him, until the morning breaks and the shadows flee away. May we realize that we are Thy children, and may we so live that when our day is done, we may face the eternal change that comes to us all in faith and confidence through Thy redeeming grace and power. May the peace of God which passeth all understanding abide with us forevermore. Amen.

[After the prayer, the Exalted Ruler may deliver in his own language a eulogy upon the life of the departed or he may call upon one or more of the members present to perform such service.]

Exalted Ruler (at the close of the eulogy): In token of the respect and affection in which the

memory of our deceased brother will forever be held among us, let us in silent meditation typify what mere words cannot express.

[The vocalist or the quartette of the lodge will sing one verse of "The Vacant Chair," as follows:]

We shall meet, but we shall miss him,
There will be the vacant chair,
But though we no more possess him,
Still our hearts his memory bear.
But a while ago we gathered,
Friendship beaming in each eye,
Now the golden cord is severed,
He has passed to realms on high.

[At the conclusion of the song the chimes sound eleven strokes, while the Organist plays softly "Auld Lang Syne."]

Exalted Ruler: Brother Secretary, you will call the name of our departed brother.

[The Secretary calls the name three times. In the event the death of more than one brother is announced, the Secretary calls each name but once.]

— Pause —

Exalted Ruler: In vain we call. He has passed into the light which is beyond the valley of the shadow of death. The places that have known him shall know him no more; but his virtues are written upon the tablets of love and memory.



[Lights on.]



